

REMARKS

The undersigned wishes to thank Examiner Estrada for the courtesy of a telephone interview. During the telephone interview, the undersigned stressed the distinctive features of the present invention as it applies to the single most important aspect of the present invention, i.e. the means by which it is retained in place over an electrical wall outlet or switch cover plate. It is submitted that tentative agreement was reached and that the claims now in the case sufficiently distinguish over the references of record. Further, proper amendments to the drawings are submitted herewith which further clarify this most important releasable attachment aspect of the present invention. No new matter has been added

THE REJECTIONS

Claims 1 to 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Skakun. Examiner Estrada characterizes the Skakun reference as disclosing all of the features of the present invention as claimed. However, it is submitted that the comments herebelow, in combination with the proposed amended drawings, approval of which is hereby requested of Examiner Estrada, place the present invention as now claimed and distinguishes the invention over the Skakun teaching.

THE INVENTION

The present invention teaches a universal paint shield for releasable attachment over an electrical wall outlet or switch cover plate. A molded plastic body is provided which is formed as a unit of plastic material having a generally rectangular front panel and top, bottom and side walls which project rearwardly of the front panel and define a substantially continuous perimeter edge thereof.

Most importantly, at least two opposing edge portions biasingly engage with the corresponding outer edge surfaces of the cover plate to both entirely cover all of the outlet assembly features for paint protection and further receive resilient engagement against these cover plate edge margins. This is accomplished by providing concavity or inwardly contoured longitudinal edges of the opposing edge portions, whether along the side or end edge portions of the plastic body, to resiliently and biasingly engage against the corresponding margins of the cover plate.

This aspect of the invention, as discussed during the telephone interview with Examiner Estrada, is emphasized in Figures 2 to 5 (as amended) at numerals **30** and **32** which clearly define the concaved or inwardly contoured resilient edges of **16** and **18** of the molded plastic body **10**. No additional retaining force, adhesive or mechanical assistive structure is required to retain the present invention in its protective positioning over the cover plate and wall outlet or switch assembly features.

This resilient attaching means distinguishes over the Skakun reference wherein all of the resilient side margins **22** in Figure 1 and **47** in Figure 4 merely "fit snugly" to protect the cover plate from paint. Viewed another way, the Skakun reference apparently receives very little if any resilient attaching force derived from these edge margins **22** and **44** but rather requires the addition of an adhesive attaching member or other means to achieve the needed releasable attachment function.

It is therefore submitted that the present invention and the claims now contained in the case, in combination with the requested approval of the drawing revisions included herewith, place the case in condition for allowance and same is respectfully requested. However, if this expectation is not met in any way, Examiner Estrada is requested to contact the undersigned directly for a second telephone interview before issuing any

further office actions.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is being deposited in the U.S. Mail, first class postage paid, addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, this December 20, 2004.


Charles J. Prescott